

## REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given to the Official Action of September 15, 2005 and reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

### Status of Claims

Claims 1, 3, 4, 11-15, 17 and 26-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blidung et al. (US Patent 5,630,309) in view of Draghetti et al. (US Publication 2003/0052020) and Beck et al. (WO91/10595).

Claims 5-7 and 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blidung et al. (US Patent 5,630,309) in view of Draghetti et al. (US Publication 2003/0052020) and Beck et al. (WO91/10595) as applied to claims 3, 15, 17 and 26-28 above, and further in view of Montemayor et al. (US Patent 5,494,398);

Claim 29 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blidung et al. (US Patent 5,630,309) in view of Draghetti et al. (US Publication 2003/0052020) and Beck et al. (WO91/10595) as applied to claims 3, 15, 17 and 26-28 above, and further in view of Focke et al. (US Patent 6,722,109);

Claims 8-10 and 21-25 stand objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form;

Claims 30 and 31 are allowed.

### Discussion of Rejected Claims 1, 3-15 and 17-29

Claims 1 and 15 recite, in part, that a group of blanks is unloaded from a first pallet in a storage area, is formed in a succession of individual blanks each of which is processed individually and is then regrouped to reconstruct the respective group, and finally is loaded onto a new pallet in the same storage area.

Blidung et al. discloses supplying stacks of blanks to a packing machine and the aim of this invention is a novel method to feed the stacks using two conveyors parallel to one another; Blidung et al. does not disclose or show the separation of individual blanks from a stack, since that Blidung teaches only how to manage complete stacks of blanks. In other words, Blidung et al. disclose unloading groups (stacks) of blank from a pallet in a storage area and forming a succession of groups (stacks) of blank, which succession is fed from two conveyors parallel one to the other.

Draghetti et al. disclose forming a succession of individual blanks from a reel of blanks, to process individually each blank, and then to feed each blank to a packing line.

Beck et al. disclose (embodiment of figure 1) arranging stacks 4 of pre-printed packs of blanks in a pack blank reservoir 2 in the form of a flat band conveyor 3, and delivering single blanks 6 in series by means of a de-stacking device 5 to a printing unit 8 arranged downstream from a folding station 7 for printing individually each blank 6. According to a further embodiment shown in figure 2, the printing unit 8 is coupled to the pack blank reservoir 2 (located above the flat band conveyor 3); the printing unit inlet 12 is provided with a reservoir for stacked pre-printed blanks and the printing unit outlet 13 is modified to deliver stacked dried over-printed blanks to the conveyor belt 3 or to provide single blanks which can be manually or mechanically re-stacked on the conveyor belt 3.

Blidung et al., Draghetti et al. and Beck et al. fail to disclose or suggest moving an initially empty second pallet into the loading area of the storage area to receive the groups of processed blanks, and then feeding the groups of processed blanks from the processing path onto the second pallet at the loading area of the storage area.

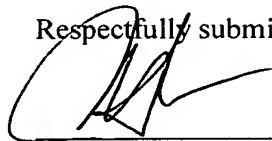
In order to reach the invention as claimed in claims 1 or 15, one would have to completely disregard the teachings given by Blidung et al. (in which the groups of blanks are not formed in a succession of individual blanks each of which is processed individually), by Draghetti et al. (in which the processed individual blanks are not regrouped to reconstruct the respective group), and by Beck et al. (in which the stacks of processed blanks are not fed to a second pallet). There is no suggestion to discard these teachings without using applicants' own disclosure as a template, and no such suggestion can be found in the references. "To establish prima facie case of obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art" MPEP § 2143.03. Accordingly, claims 1 and 15 are considered allowable over the cited references. Claims 3-14 and 17-29 depending from claims 1 and 15 respectively are also considered allowable with their respective parents.

From the above it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to meet a crucial limitation in the claims and therefore the rejection is untenable. As previously explained, the arbitrary combination of three references for various different features thereof does not render the claims obvious. In addition, in rejecting other claims the Examiner has relied upon a fourth reference which further exacerbates the improper combination of references under 35 U.S.C. 103. There is no motivation or incentive in the references which

would justify extracting the various teachings set forth by the examiner to arrive at the claimed invention. Moreover, the absence of the crucial limitation of feeding the groups of processed blanks from the processing path onto the initially empty second pallettes at the loading area of the storage area is not evident from any of the references. Accordingly, taken in combination the claims are deemed to be allowable as they are not obvious within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 103.

For the above reasons, early and favorable reconsideration of the application and allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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